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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics
Washington, D. C.

FARM POPULATION ESTIMATES, JANUARY 1948

The postwar increase in the farm population of the United States was halted during 1947, according to estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The number of people living on farms in January 1948 was 27,440,000, not appreciably different from the number a year earlier. This record of no significant change in the farm population during 1947 contrasts with the gain in the number of people living on farms that took place in the two preceding years. From the low point of 25,190,000 reached in January 1945 at the peak of World War II, the farm population increased by nearly 10 percent to a level of 27,550,000 in January 1947, as demobilized veterans and some civilian migrants returned to farms following the ending of the war.

The stability in the total number of persons living on farms at the beginning and at the end of 1947 conceals important changes that took place in the farm population last year. Births to farm residents exceeded deaths by nearly a half million — the highest annual natural increase recorded since 1925, when the farm population was about a tenth larger than at present. An estimated 750,000 babies were born in farm families during 1947, when birth rates were high all over the country.

Net migration of civilians from farms to nonfarm places amounted to 640,000 in 1947. As usual, the net change in population from migration resulted from considerably larger streams of migration in both directions. Nearly a million persons are estimated to have moved on to farms from cities, towns, and villages during the year, whereas more than a million and a half moved away from farms. The population loss from civilian migration was offset to only a small extent by the net increase of 47,000 resulting from the excess of returning veterans over the number of farm men who entered the armed forces in 1947. The net loss in farm population from all types of movement exceeded the gain in population due to natural increase by 110,000, leaving the farm population just a fraction of a percent smaller than at the beginning of 1947.

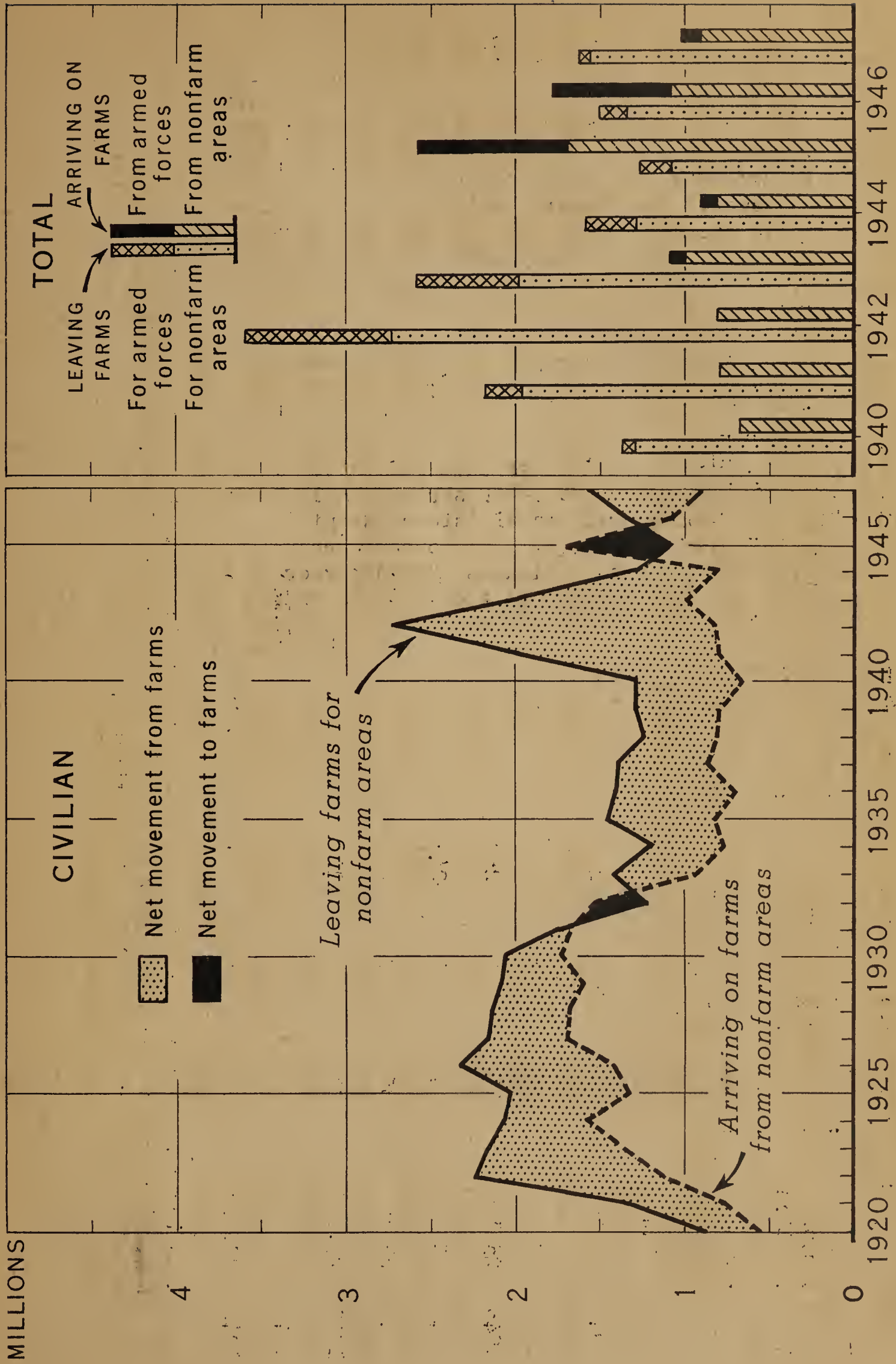
Although there were no marked increases or decreases in the farm population of any major area of the country, the resumption of the downward trend in farm population was clearest in the areas which had lost most heavily during World War II. The five geographic divisions in the central part of the United States showed slight decreases, while the divisions on the east and west coasts showed slight gains or no appreciable change. The 20 States in the central divisions of the United States (East and West North Central and East and West South Central) and the 8 States in the Mountain Division have had an over-all net decline of 12.3 percent in their farm population since 1940; other divisions have had recent gains and a net reduction of only 3.0 percent since 1940. A factor influencing the movement of people to farms in the urbanized States of the coastal divisions seems to have been the scarcity of housing in cities.

Note on Method of Deriving Estimates

The estimates contained in this report are based on bench-mark data from the Censuses of Population and Agriculture, current enumerative sample surveys, and mailed questionnaires returned by farmers. For January 1944 and later dates the estimates are adjusted to the level of farm population of the United States, as estimated jointly by the Bureau of the Census and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics on the basis of enumerative surveys and published in the Census-BAE series. For January 1945, the geographic distribution of the farm population is based on the returns from the 1945 Census of Agriculture, adjusted to the total level of farm population shown in the Census-BAE series. A discussion of the comparability of the farm population data from the 1945 Census of Agriculture with the current estimates may be found in Census-BAE No. 9. Utilization of the new 1945 Census bench-mark data was the basis for revision of the geographic-division estimates for the years 1941-45 that was issued last year.

For January 1947, the geographic distribution of the farm population is based on the BAE January 1947 Survey of Agriculture, adjusted to the total level of farm population shown in the Census-BAE series. All other estimates of the farm population of major geographic divisions except those for 1948 are interpolations on the basis of mailed questionnaire returns between the 1940, 1945, and 1947 estimates. The estimates by major geographic divisions for 1948 are based on questionnaire reports of changes that took place in the farm population during 1947; the 1948 estimates are preliminary and subject to revision. All estimates of moves to and from farms and other kinds of changes in the farm population are based on mailed questionnaire returns adjusted to the population totals.

MOVEMENT TO AND FROM FARMS, UNITED STATES, 1920-47 *



* BIRTHS AND DEATHS NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

Table 1.-Annual estimates of the farm population, births and deaths occurring in the farm population, and number of persons moving to and from farms, United States, 1940-48

Year	Farm population on January 1	Change through			Change through migration					
		natural increase			Civilian migration			Military migration		
		Total	Births	Deaths	Total	To	From	Total	To	From
		1	:	:	1/	farms	farms	armed forces	armed forces	armed forces
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
1948	27,440									
1947	27,550	483	750	-267	-593	914	-1,554	47	-69	116
1946	26,850	419	674	-255	281	1,077	-1,343	547	-159	706
1945	25,190	354	604	-250	1,306	1,684	-1,081	703	-191	894
1944	25,521	345	591	-246	-676	817	-1,293	-200	-300	100
1943	26,659	355	610	-255	-1,493	994	-1,982	-505	-605	100
1942	29,048	390	660	-270	-2,779	819	-2,739	-859	-859	-
1941	29,988	417	702	-285	-1,357	814	-1,960	-211	-211	-
1940	30,269	400	696	-296	-681	690	-1,296	-75	-75	-

1/ Including persons who have not moved but who are no longer in the farm population because agricultural operations have ceased on the place where they are living.
See page 2 for note on method of deriving estimates.

Table 2.-World War II and early postwar changes in the farm population, United States and major geographic divisions, 1940-48 ^{1/}

Area	: January :		: January :		: Change 1940-45 :		: Change 1945-48 :		: Change 1940-48 :	
	: 1948 :		: 1945 :		: 1,000 :		: 1,000 :		: 1,000 :	
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	1,000	Percent
United States	27,440	25,190	30,269	617	-5,079	-16.8	2,250	8.9	-2,829	-9.3
New England	761	604	617	-13	-13	-2.1	157	26.0	144	23.3
Middle Atlantic	1,632	1,543	1,772	-229	-229	-12.9	89	5.8	-140	-7.9
East North Central	4,056	3,886	4,589	-703	-703	-15.3	170	4.4	-533	-11.6
West North Central	4,220	4,016	4,676	-660	-660	-14.1	204	5.1	-456	-9.8
South Atlantic	5,714	5,011	6,025	-1,014	-1,014	-16.8	703	14.0	-311	-5.2
East South Central	4,725	4,250	5,238	-988	-988	-18.9	475	11.2	-513	-9.8
West South Central	4,071	3,723	5,008	-1,285	-1,285	-25.7	348	9.3	-937	-18.7
Mountain	998	1,016	1,102	-86	-86	-7.8	-18	-1.8	-104	-9.4
Pacific	1,263	1,141	1,242	-101	-101	-8.1	122	10.7	21	1.7

^{1/} See page 2 for note on method of deriving estimates.

Table 3.-Annual estimates of the farm population, births and deaths occurring in the farm population, and number of persons moving to and from farms for geographic divisions, 1940-48

Area and year	Farm population: on January 1	Change through			Change through			Change through farm-to- farm movement	
		natural increase	Total	Births	Deaths	Total	To farms		From farms
1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000		
New England									
1948	761								
1947	753	2	15	-13	1	47	-46	5	
1946	709	8	15	-7	37	76	-39	-1	
1945	604	6	13	-7	100	140	-40	-1	
1944	603	4	12	-8	-1	28	-29	-2	
1943	607	7	13	-6	-9	59	-68	-2	
1942	614	4	11	-7	-9	57	-66	-2	
1941	616	5	12	-7	-6	32	-38	-1	
1940 4/	617	3	11	-8	-2	29	-31	-2	
Middle Atlantic									
1948	1,632								
1947	1,623	26	43	-17	-18	65	-83	1	
1946	1,599	19	37	-18	-5	90	-95	10	
1945	1,543	12	31	-19	35	109	-74	9	
1944	1,539	13	32	-19	-17	66	-83	8	
1943	1,590	14	32	-18	-71	68	-139	6	
1942	1,719	14	33	-19	-141	42	-183	-2	
1941	1,767	13	32	-19	-64	52	-116	3	
1940 4/	1,772	12	32	-20	-30	50	-80	13	
East North Central									
1948	4,056								
1947	4,077	61	102	-41	-83	148	-231	1	
1946	4,020	48	93	-45	0	258	-258	9	
1945	3,886	41	81	-40	70	274	-204	23	
1944	3,844	40	80	-40	-23	181	-204	25	
1943	4,026	29	75	-46	-233	148	-381	22	
1942	4,431	35	83	-48	-467	117	-584	27	
1941	4,569	41	85	-44	-207	123	-330	28	
1940 4/	4,589	38	84	-46	-88	127	-215	30	
West North Central									
1948	4,220								
1947	4,258	70	106	-36	-123	134	-257	15	
1946	4,187	71	106	-35	-5	264	-269	5	
1945	4,016	59	93	-34	97	313	-216	15	
1944	4,087	60	95	-35	-145	128	-273	14	
1943	4,234	61	94	-33	-222	152	-374	14	
1942	4,532	60	99	-39	-369	110	-479	11	
1941	4,641	59	95	-36	-195	118	-313	27	
1940 4/	4,676	53	89	-36	-98	94	-192	10	

(Continued)

Table 3.--Annual estimates of the farm population, births and deaths occurring in the farm population, and number of persons moving to and from farms for geographic divisions, 1940-48 (Continued)

Area and year	:	:	Change through		:	Change through		:
	:	:	natural increase		:	migration		:
	Farm	:	:	:	:	:	:	Change
	population:	:	:	:	:	To	From	through
on	Total:	Births:	Deaths:	Total	farms	farms	farm	
January 1	:	:	:	1/ 2/	2/	1/	movement 3/	
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	
<u>South Atlantic</u>								
1948	5,714							
1947	5,671	117	170	-53	-61	160	-221	-13
1946	5,475	104	153	-49	128	321	-193	-36
1945	5,011	88	139	-51	427	631	-204	-51
1944	5,115	78	127	-49	-135	119	-254	-47
1943	5,334	79	129	-50	-237	142	-379	-61
1942	5,808	99	150	-51	-527	90	-617	-46
1941	5,984	108	168	-60	-253	114	-367	-31
1940 4/	6,025	102	166	-64	-132	100	-232	-11
<u>East South Central</u>								
1948	4,725							
1947	4,777	86	139	-53	-127	139	-266	-11
1946	4,621	72	116	-44	94	297	-203	-10
1945	4,250	65	106	-41	335	487	-152	-29
1944	4,330	66	107	-41	-129	119	-248	-17
1943	4,553	74	117	-43	-292	121	-413	-5
1942	4,970	79	123	-44	-493	88	-581	-3
1941	5,173	91	143	-52	-284	89	-373	-10
1940 4/	5,238	91	143	-52	-138	83	-221	-18
<u>West South Central</u>								
1948	4,071							
1947	4,128	80	115	-35	-150	180	-330	13
1946	4,008	68	105	-37	44	308	-264	8
1945	3,723	57	96	-39	215	454	-239	13
1944	3,858	55	92	-37	-200	123	-323	10
1943	4,158	69	107	-38	-379	177	-556	10
1942	4,693	75	116	-41	-602	119	-721	-8
1941	4,911	75	120	-45	-265	132	-397	-28
1940 4/	5,008	78	124	-46	-145	108	-253	-30
<u>Mountain</u>								
1948	998							
1947	1,011	23	29	-6	-22	71	-93	-14
1946	1,012	17	26	-9	-27	57	-84	9
1945	1,016	14	24	-10	-28	44	-72	10
1944	1,022	15	24	-9	-26	71	-97	5
1943	1,030	13	22	-9	-26	108	-134	5
1942	1,077	14	24	-10	-73	100	-173	12
1941	1,099	16	26	-10	-48	77	-125	10
1940 4/	1,102	15	26	-11	-28	41	-69	10

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Table 3.-Annual estimates of the farm population, births and deaths occurring in the farm population, and number of persons moving to and from farms for geographic divisions, 1940-48 (Continued)

Area and year	:	:	Change through			Change through			:
	:	:	natural increase			migration			:Change
	:	Farm	:	:	:	:	:	:	:through
	:population:	:	:	:	:	To	From	:	:farm-to-
on	:	Total:Births:Deaths:	Total	farms	farms	farms	farms	:	:farm
January 1	:	:	:	1/ 2/	2/	1/	2/	:	:movement 2
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Pacific									
1948	1,263								
1947	1,252	18	31	-13	-10	86	-96		3
1946	1,219	12	23	-11	15	112	-97		6
1945	1,141	12	21	-9	55	126	-71		11
1944	1,123	14	22	-8	0	82	-82		4
1943	1,127	9	21	-12	-24	119	-143		11
1942	1,204	10	21	-11	-98	96	-194		11
1941	1,228	9	21	-12	-35	77	-112		2
1940 4/	1,242	8	21	-13	-20	58	-78		-2

1/ Includes persons who entered the armed forces.

2/ Includes persons who returned from the armed forces.

3/ The net movement of persons from farms in one geographic division to farms in other divisions.

4/ Farm population January 1, adjusted on the basis of Census enumeration of April 1.

See page 2 for note on method of deriving estimates.